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TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Letter

1. Advisory Council Membership
2. Background and Mandate
3. The Year's Meetings
4. The Year's Accomplishments
5. Recommendations
6. Public Consultation and Information

Status of Women NWT

The Honourable Jeannie Marie-Jewell
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Government of the Northwest Territories

I am pleased to present you with the Annual Report of the NWT Advisory Council on the Status of Women for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1988.

On behalf of the Members of the Council, I wish to thank you for your help and cooperation. We have also appreciated the support and assistance provided by the Women's Secretariat.

Although we feel a sense of accomplishment respecting the past year's activities, there are many matters which are yet to be properly addressed. These include the inclusion of women in affirmative action employment policies, implementation of pay equity, flexible work hours and job sharing within the Territorial Public Service, funding for daycare facilities and users, implementation of rational standards for daycare facilities. These and other issues directly affect women throughout the Northwest Territories. We are hopeful that significant progress will be made in these areas over the coming year.

Sincerely,

Katherine Peterson
President
NWT Advisory Council
on the Status of Women

June 1988

Women's Secretariat, P.O. Box 1320, Yellowknife, N.W.T. X1A 2L9 Telephone (403) 920-6177

1. ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AT MARCH 1988

President:	Katherine Peterson	Yellowknife, N.W.T.
Vice-President:	Janet Armstrong	Iqaluit, N.W.T.
Vice-President:	Edna Elias	Yellowknife/Coppermine, N.W.T
Members:	Florence Barnaby	Fort Good Hope, N.W.T.
	Peepeelee Nutaralak	Broughton Island, N.W.T.

PAST COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Jeela Moss-Davies	Ottawa, Ontario
Kate Tompkins	Yellowknife, N.W.T.
Cindy Gilday	Yellowknife, N.W.T.
Helen Adamanche	Coppermine, N.W.T.
Ruby Arnana'aq	Baker Lake, N.W.T.
Faith Cronk	Yellowknife, N.W.T.
Nancy Tupik	Baker Lake, N.W.T.
Bertha Allen	Inuvik, N.W.T.
Emelia Gratrix	Fort Smith, N.W.T.
Elsie Casaway	Yellowknife, N.W.T.
Rita Cli	Fort Simpson, N.W.T.
Leonie Duffy	Coral Harbour, N.W.T.

STAFF

Secretary: Vacant
Administrative Clerk: Ruth Utatnaq

2. BACKGROUND AND MANDATE

Goal

To work towards the equality of women and men in all aspects of society in the NWT.

Background

The Act that established The NWT Advisory Council on the Status of Women was proclaimed on January 16, 1984.

It stems from several past initiatives of women in the Territory. A Status of Women Committee was appointed by the Territorial Government 1973-1979. A group of women was active on this Committee studying the problems of women both within and without the government workforce. In a report to the government in 1976 they identified several issues of concern.

There were territorial women's conferences in 1975, 1979 and 1982 which gave much impetus for the government to establish the Advisory Council.

Composition

The Advisory Council consists of such number of members as the Minister deems appropriate, who are representative of the women of the Territories and their interests, and includes representation of the regions of the Territories and Territorial women's organizations. The members of the Advisory Council are appointed for a term of three years.

Role and Mandate

The Council is an advisory body to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women. It offers advice on matters relating to the status of women referred to them and on issues they deem appropriate.

Council activities include:

- Receiving and hearing petitions and suggestions concerning the status of women.
- Recommending and undertaking appropriate research on matters concerning the status of women.
- Recommending and participating in programs concerning the status of women.
- Publishing reports, studies and recommendations as it deems advisable.
- Furnishing the public with information on matters concerning the status of women.
- Recommending policies, programs and legislation to promote the status of women.
- Submitting reports to the Minister for presentation to the Legislative Assembly.
- Assisting the Minister in developing public awareness of the status of women.

3. THE YEAR'S MEETINGS

Council Meetings

April 1987	Yellowknife
June 1987	Prelude Lake
October 1987	Yellowknife

Other Meetings Attended by Council Members

April 1987	Spence Bay	Inuvik Women's Association Annual General Meeting
November 1987	Yellowknife	Meeting with representatives of Inuit Women's Association

Committees with Advisory Council Representation

Affirmative Action Advisory Committee
Ad Hoc Committee on Family Law Reform

4. THE YEAR'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

NWT Women's Conference - Rankin Inlet

Women across the territories have indicated a need for personal development training workshops.

Initiated and organized by the Advisory Council jointly with the Kataujak Society in Rankin Inlet, a group of women from across the North formed a Planning Committee. They planned the conference including a series of workshops on personal development, decision making and understanding the political system. It was held at Rankin Inlet in March 1988. The Conference Report is called "Visions by Women" and is available from the Advisory Council office.

Five Year Action Plan

The primary objective of the "Five Year Action Plan: Equality for Women" is to support and encourage the participation of women on an equal basis with men in all aspects of society. It is a Government of the Northwest Territories document and the appropriate departments are being encouraged to take steps to implement the action plan items.

The Advisory Council has been lobbying the Government on items including the implementation of an affirmative action program for women, the hiring of more women in senior management and decision-making levels, improvements in the field of child care, changes in legislation to simplify family law, literacy promotion and upgrading, nonsexist guidance counselling, improved facilities for craft and cottage industries and equal pay for work of equal value.

Talent Bank

The Talent Bank of women's names, from which recommendations for appointments of women to various boards and councils are made, has received 100 names from 5 regions across the NWT. Women were named to the Worker's Compensation Board and the Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Board on recommendation from the Talent Bank. However it is not used regularly by Ministers when making appointments to Boards.

Affirmative Action

The Advisory Council has continued to participate in the development of an affirmative action policy which includes women through its representations made to the Affirmative Action Advisory Committee and the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

Family Law Reform

The Advisory Council has pressed for wholesale changes to existing family law legislation in the Northwest Territories. The Advisory Council participated in meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee in Family Law Reform, which has made detailed proposals to the Minister of Justice. The Committee met periodically from October 1987 through January 1988 with proposals being presented in January 1988.

"Northern Women Talk" Newsletter

Published 4 times a year, the newsletter has a circulation of 2,000 in English and Inuktitut. We welcome articles, stories and letters.

Research and Projects

During the last year the activities of the Advisory Council have increased to include research and projects on several areas of concern to women such as:

- An investigation and analysis of the status of women in the NWT arts and crafts industry. (Report is available from the Advisory Council office)

- Review of Special provisions for women workers in the NWT in response to Labour Canada request.

- All Candidates Forum on Issues of Concern to Women and Families for October 5th territorial election; questionnaire in NWT newspapers to all territorial candidates; and pamphlet for women on how to get involved in the political process.

- Research respecting facilities and programs available for women offenders in NWT.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Equal opportunity for the development of the human potential of both men and women is a benefit to society as a whole and is the responsibility and concern of individual men and women, government and non-government organizations. The Advisory Council wishes to recommend a number of actions to the government.

a. GNWT 1985 Five Year Plan of Action

As of the March 1987 Report, 8 out of 53 items have been implemented.

Recommendation

- That the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women provide semi annual reports on progress to the Advisory Council.
- That the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women actively encourage implementation of the Five Year Action Plan by affected Government Departments.

b. Spousal Assault

The problem of spousal assault is of such complexity that it requires a continuous and dedicated effort by Government departments, community organizations and concerned professionals and lay-people. Only through such an effort is positive change likely to result.

Recommendations

- That the Government continue to dedicatedly implement with utmost dedication the 3 Year Plan of Action for Spousal Assault.
- That the Government provide aid to victims, support initiatives from community agencies, provide treatment and assistance for batterers and give direction and support for other government departments and agencies.

c. Affirmative Action Policy

There is a need to bring about an equal representation of women in certain occupations in the GNWT. In December 1987 there were 33 women in senior management (Hay Plan positions) as compared to 157 men.

Recommendations

- That the Government of the NWT actively support the inclusion of women in the Affirmative Action Policy.

c. Daycare

In December 1987 the Federal Government announced its long awaited initiatives in the field of childcare. To date the Government of the Northwest Territories has not announced any complementary initiatives.

Recommendations

- That the Government of the Northwest Territories immediately announce policy and funding initiatives respecting the provision of childcare facilities and assistance to childcare facility users in the Northwest Territories.
- That the Government of the Northwest Territories disclose the results of consultation undertaken in August 1987 respecting daycare facilities and standards.

e. **Structure of Advisory Council**

The Minister Responsible for the Status of Women has announced a review of the structure of the Advisory Council as well as the Women's Secretariat. The Advisory Council has provided initial advice respecting administrative changes.

Recommendations

- That the review process be promptly undertaken and completed such that recommended changes may be expeditiously implemented.
- That the review process be undertaken with full consultation with the Advisory Council.

6. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND INFORMATION

Members of the Advisory Council invite NWT residents to write or phone with suggestions for increasing opportunities for women in the NWT.

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